Great to have you on board…

In this letter, you’ll find one of my old (and original) Inner Circle Newsletters. It’s a good one.

You’ll get to know how I teach, which is pretty unique.

If you have struggled with ‘regular’ golf instruction in the past… This will help you.

Why? Well because I don’t teach mechanics.

Instead I teach you how to hit the ball, and how to make shots. Instead of focusing on your body and making it DO things (like lag, spine tile, weight shift, rotate hips) to produce a golf swing…

We do it the old-school way. We focus on controlling the clubhead and making IT do you bidding.

You choose what sort of shot you want, and then I teach you how to produce that shot by delivering the clubhead a particular way. And your body just figures it out as it goes.

Should really be called Natural Golf — but some guy already claimed it years ago.

Anyway, the idea is, you have a perfect, natural swing inside you. It’s my job to bring that out for you.

A little about me… I’m self taught… Played golf since I was eight (and I’m now 70)… Won 60 something tournaments… shot thousands of rounds in the 60’s and best score was a 60 back in 1961… In my 20’s and 30’s I could hit the ball over 350 yards consistently, and even drove a green at 415 once time (got a good bounce that day)… And I’ve taught over 70,000 lessons in the past 50 years.

For a trip down memory lane: You may even remember the seeing ‘ol Darrrell in Golf Digest advetorials years ago (ran a bunch of times from 2000-2005 and story was an amazing success - which sold hundreds of thousands of DVD’s at the time). I found an old copy of one of the ads recently, and attached it here for a bit of fun.

Point is, the way I learned golf, and the way I teach golf works — no matter if you are young or old, athletic or out of shape.. because it’s YOUR natural swing.

Enjoy the newsletter, and look forward to you reading my daily emails.

Warmly,

Darrell Klassen
Have a chuckle of this write up about ol' Darrell — in Golf Digest 2001

If petite women and 12-year-old kids are using this secret to hit perfect drives over 250 yards... imagine what it can do for YOU!

How Does An Out-Of-Shape 55 Year-Old Golfer, Crippled By Arthritis & 71 Lbs. Overweight, Still Consistently Humiliate PGA Pros In Head-To-Head Matches By Hitting Every Tee Shot Further And Straighter Down The Fairway?

The answer will shock and delight you! It's an amazingly simple “2-step” Maximum Distance revelation that we, swear, will take you just 3 swings to master yourself... instantly pumping massive payloads of accurate power into your swing no matter how uncoordinated or out-of-shape you are... and guaranteeing your very next tee shot will be a breathtaking dead solid straight drive of 250-plus yards! Plus... if you aren’t convinced, these guys will pay you $10!

(Dateline: Visalia, CA) Do you think golf is an easy game? Darrell Klassen does... and he's been proving it for most of his life, using a single 2-step secret that allowed him to zoom into the top ranks of the “underground” professional golf world... and stay on top even as his body deteriorated into a complete mess. What’s more, he’s now ready to teach you everything he knows.

It’s a fascinating story worth finding out about, if you love golf.

Darrell, you see, is now pushing 60, easily seventy pounds overweight, so nearsighted his glasses look like Coke bottle bottoms... and he has advanced osteo-arthritis so serious the doctors want to replace his knees with slabs of plastic right now. (Darrell wants to wait another five years, though the pain is getting worse.)

You hurt just watching him hobble up to the tee, and wonder...

“How The Heck Is This Poor Old Pathetic Guy Gonna Swing A Golf Club?”

Certainly the PGA pros Darrell has regularly played for high-stakes money used to ask that question. But not anymore. Because Darrell simply gazes down the fairway, settles in for his swing... and then blasts another gorgeous 250-yard drive that sails straight down the middle. And he does it again on the next tee... and the next... and the next. All the way back to the clubhouse, where he finally gets to sit his fat bulk down and rest his ravaged knees... and collect all the money. All the money.

In over thirty years of playing high-stakes "private betting" professional golf (where, as Lee Trevino said, the real golfers finally show themselves), Darrell has never lost. And he’s consistently played against (and crushed) the best golfers on the planet — including a major PGA star who won 5 Tour events not too long ago (and who, the lawyers insist, must remain nameless).

Darrell is the hero of all older, less-than-athletic golfers everywhere. Most civilians don’t know about this “underground” professional golf tour. It's the best-kept secret among high-profile golfers whose reputations would be tarnished if the public found out.

But you know those big-deal “Skins” games on television, with Nicklaus, Palmer, Trevino and the others? Well, that’s not the only time the pros play for “private big bucks”. They love the REAL golf that gets played when you have your own money on the line. No television cameras, no adoring crowds of fans, and no big corporate-sponsored trophies. Just you, and the guys you’re playing against.

And, if you lose, you pay out of your own pocket. It REALLY hurts to lose this way.

Darrell simply honed his game so that he...

Never Lost!

Is Darrell some kind of superman? Nope. He spent his youth hitting a thousand golf balls a day, studying each and every shot until he understood how to drive it far. And he discovered the secret to long, straight drives that go exactly where you want them to is actually incredibly easy and simple.

Back then, he was using an ancient persimmon-wood MacGregor driver, and hitting those sloppy rubber-band wound, liquid core balata balls that were so uneven and so fragile they would slice open even with a perfectly-hit 3-wood. (Remember?) Even so, with his simple secret, Darrell was hitting true 350-yard drives!

Golf, he’d discovered, really is an easy game... once you know the REAL secrets.

He immediately became a professional golfer. Not a “tour” golfer... his marriage would have withstood the separations being on the Tour required. Instead, Darrell stayed close to home in California and took on all comers with the money to bet. You want to feel some pressure on the tee? Try having $1,400 on the line as you step up to drive a hole... playing against scratch golfers...

With Not A Nickel In Your Pocket!

That’s the kind of “must win” pressure Lee Trevino was talking about. And, that’s confidence. Yet Darrell never sweated... because he had discovered the simple secret to driving far and straight, every time.

He knew how to win at golf, every time. Up to now, Darrell has jealously guarded this awesome secret of his... sharing it only with friends, the occasional student he took a liking to, and his wife. (She’s just 5’3”, but hits her driver 270 yards off the tee!) He likes to teach — but he’s too lazy to advertise his services (and never has). Nevertheless, word of mouth has him booked five years ahead. And people fly in from all over the world to this tiny farming town just to take a single lesson from him.

That’s all you need, really. One lesson. In fact... to "get" this amazing power-distance and-accuracy driving secret yourself...

All You Need Is
3 Swings... Guaranteed!

And that’s a real guarantee, too. The company that convinced Darrell to “go public"
I had the pleasure of playing nine holes with my youngest son. He is technically a step-son, but no one would ever know that. I married Preston’s mother when he was only ten years old, and we just seemed to hit it off right from the start, and we are the best of mates—yet I am his dad. It’s a great deal!!!

I started teaching him to play when he was eleven, and throughout high school he played on the school team. He consistently played in one of the top three spots on the team. His senior year he played number one most of the time, and he averaged shooting between one or two under par to one or two over par.

He’s twenty-six now, and he’s a state trooper (California Highway Patrolman). This was always his dream. After he graduated from the University of California in Fresno, he went straight into the Highway Patrol Academy for six months.

I know I am boring you with my family stuff, but you need to hear what I’m going to tell you now.

Preston only plays golf eight or ten times a year, now. He’s been married for two years, and he and his wife are expecting their first child in July. He doesn’t go to the range and practice, either.

When we played our little nine-hole round recently, he fired a smooth two under par at me, and he waxed my hind side quite handily. I shot even par round, even with all of my disabilities. I used to hit driver wedge into the first hole of the course we played. It plays 395 yards. I had to hit driver three wood in order to get there, and that is fairly normal with these hips and knees.

Fortunately, my three wood landed on the green, and I just missed the putt from thirty feet. It was an easy par, though, for the old crippled man.

Here’s the story I want you to get. The human body was created so the hands and wrists work up and down, as I have always told you. Well, Preston has always been instructed to swing the club in this fashion, just as I preach at you.

The reason this is so important is for the simple reason that you will NEVER forget how to hammer with your hands. You will never forget how to use your wrists in the up and down manner as I am teaching you. It’s just like riding a bicycle. YOU WILL NEVER FORGET IT. Once you have the confidence in using your hands to swing the club up and down and take a divot IMMEDIATELY upon contact with the golf ball, you will be able to play good golf the rest of your life.

Students write and call constantly to tell me how they took some time away from the game, and when they returned, they still had their golf swing. They hadn’t forgotten anything about it, because it is so simple. Not only is this the most natural motion known to mankind, it is also something you will NEVER LOSE the rest of your life.

Preston takes the club back to the top of the swing and just HAMMERS down with his left hand and wrist. He does not PULL THE CLUB DOWN AND SAVE THE ANGLE OF THE WRIST as all of the “famous” instructors teach. He merely snaps the hands downward into the swing and lets it all relax and flow.
where it wants to go. It is truly a thing of beauty to watch him swing the club. He nails it, too. That first hole I just described to you at 395 yards. He was less than sixty yards from the green with his tee shot. The number nine hole is a 500 yard five par. Preston hit his driver out there in the 325 range, and then he hit his seven-iron onto the green from 175 yards out. He is six feet five inches tall, and he generates a TON of clubhead speed.

All of this is the same release I keep trying to explain to you. Owen Middleton was here for a few days, and in a matter of minutes, he was SMASHING the ball right down the middle of the range. He was completely amazed at the amount of wrists I kept encouraging him to use in the swing. However, it is ALWAYS an upward and downward motion of the wrists. This is the same motion we make when we chop or hammer.

In the golf swing, we hammer or chop on an angle. I had a lady come to see me today who pulled EVERY SHOT she attempted dead left. It was pathetic. I really felt sorry for her. Her husband and I have known each other for over fifty years. He is a pretty good stick, but he won’t come to see me for instruction, because he already plays to a six or seven handicap. You know the kind. They think they already know all there is to know about the golf swing. Don’t get me wrong. He is a mate of mine, also.

I had to tell you all of that because he tries and tries to teach his wife how to stop pulling the ball. He has taken her to two other golf instructors, because he wasn’t willing to spend the fees I charge on her game. What a waste of money!!! She hasn’t learned anything from her husband, and she told me the money he spent on the other two teachers was “money down the drain.”

I just chatted with her for the first twenty minutes of her lesson. You should have seen him squirm while all of the talking was taking place. He could just see the dollars flying out the window. She wasn’t getting to swing the club, because we were only talking. In fact, we were talking about a lot of things which have nothing to do with golf. That really had him nervous.

She had told him on the way to the course she thought he was probably wasting money again. She didn’t feel she was capable of learning anything. After all, the others pros weren’t able to help her. They are golf professionals, so they obviously know what they are doing. The problem, she thought, was all hers. There must surely be something wrong with her, because she didn’t understand how to do what she had been told by the other professionals.

Do you get the picture here? Can you identify with her feelings? I hear this quite frequently from my students. They think something is a matter with them because they are not able to perform the things, and they don’t understand the things, the golf professionals are saying, or teaching.

After we had visited for at least twenty minutes, I asked her if she was ready to try some of the things we had discussed. She was, and she stepped right up to her very first ball and hit it right down the middle. You should have seen her face. Better yet, you should have seen her husband’s face. They were both completely amazed at how easy and simple it was to hit a golf ball where she wanted it to go.

She had played some baseball in her younger years, and she readily grasped the concept of hitting the ball toward right field or to left field. I had instructed her that I didn’t want her to try to hit it straight. I only wanted her to learn to “feel the difference between” hitting it to left field and hitting it to right field. Granted, she couldn’t figure out why I didn’t want her to go straight.
In just a matter if a dozen swings, she was able to pull the ball left on command, and to push it to the right on command. I wanted her to be able to acquire a feel for the difference between the two, and she picked right up on it.

I then told her when she was hitting the ball to the left—pulling it—she was intentionally doing the very same thing she was doing when she ACCIDENTALLY pulled her shot. I told her that is the only way known to pull a golf shot, and you have to learn how to do it on purpose in order to know what you are doing accidentally. This is how you learn to become your own coach.

After I had her do that, I asked her to think about the things she used to do with a tennis ball. I asked her if she knew how to curve a tennis ball left and right. She did, so I had her tell me how to do it, and I had her demonstrate how she would do it if her hand were the tennis racquet. She did that just great.

Then I asked her to use the same thoughts and techniques in order to curve the golf balls left and right. You cannot even begin to understand the excitement she felt when she hit her first “draw.” Her jaw dropped all the way to the ground with amazement. Then she asked if she could try to fade one, and she did that successfully on her second try.

She had never hit a draw, so she took a quick liking to that shot. Once she was able to hit the draw, I asked her where she thought she should hit the golf ball in order to draw it in toward her target. She thought for a moment, and said, “I need to hit it out to the right of the target for that. How do I do that?” I told her to “just do it.”

I told her you can either aim to the right, or she could either merely swing the club out to the right in order to hit it to the right. She caught onto that thought quickly, too, and merely addressed the ball and did it. It was fun to watch her, and it was exciting for her to be able to do it so easily.

I gave her a one-hour lesson, and at the end of the hour, she could make her golf ball do whatever she wanted it to do. This is a sixty-four old lady. She is not necessarily a great athlete. However, as she put it, she had reached the end of her rope, and she was desperate to learn. It worked, too. She got it!!!

It was so exciting for me to see her learn how to control her golf shots. It was pretty exciting for her husband, too. He couldn’t stop thanking me for making it so simple—for both of them.

I’m quite certain this all sounds like a big “pat-myself-on-the-back” session, but it definitely isn’t. This is merely a statement of confirmation of how simple this is supposed to be. Golf is not rocket science. It is nothing more than a game requiring the use of a ball and a paddle. The paddle just happens to have a very long handle on it, and as a result, we call it a “club.”

I still want you to go to the practice range and learn to curve the golf balls left and right on command. Then I want you to learn how to swing the club to the left—pulling the ball—when you decide to curve it to the right. Then I want you to learn how to swing the club slightly out to the right—which is off your right leg (just like touring players do)—and hit your ball to the right of your target, while CURVING THE BALLS BACK TO THE LEFT.

OK! That’s all I’m going to talk about that subject for this issue.

I don’t want to get into trouble for sharing this with you, but the touring professional with whom my student spent the day is Phil Mickelson. I do not have permission to say Phil said I was a great teacher. At the same time, I was not instructed that I could not tell you where my student was and who he went to see for the day. I simply want to make it clear that Phil Mickelson has not and did not PERSONALLY indorse me as a golf instructor. He merely told Harold he had a GREAT teacher.
But I understand that Mr. Mickelson was quite impressed with my student, and told the group to look my up if they wanted to learn how to swing the golf club like a touring professional. He told them to especially try to take some instruction from me regarding the short game, because that is where the hands are most important in the golf swing. He told the group we MUST USE OUR HANDS IN THE SHORT GAME IF WE EVER EXPECT TO ACQUIRE ANY TOUCH OR FEEL. “All of the feel for the short game comes from the hands,” Phil told them.

My student, Harold, began to chuckle, and Phil asked him what was so funny. Harold told him, “Darrell has been telling me that for the past eighteen years, and he is the only professional, until hearing you say it, Phil, I’ve ever heard say that. Darrell always says the feel comes from the hands and fingers—especially for the short game.”

Phil told the group that ALL OF THE TOUR PLAYERS play the short game with their hands and wrists—as opposed to using their arms like a pendulum. He went on to tell the group that he had never seen an amateur use his hands like the tour players do, until he met Harold. He was quite impressed with Harold’s ability to hit the golf ball, as well as the way he played the short game.

Harold consistently hit his tee shots twenty to forty yards past Phil, and he told me he wasn’t swinging hard. He was just putting the 70% swing on the ball I always try to get him to use. You do not have to jump out of your skin in order to hit it long. You MUST learn how to make clubhead speed, though, and that’s accomplished with the proper use of the hands.

I’m hoping I will be able to use that as a public recommendation some day. I also hope I get to meet Phil and spend a bit of time with him. Maybe it will happen sometime this year. If it does, you will be the first to hear about it.

Hey! You are having your summer at this time of the year. We are having our winter. The nights are around zero C, and the days are around 12 degrees C. That is around 32 degrees at night and averages about 56 degrees Fahrenheit during the day.

What does that have to do with golf instruction? Something very important. Out on the tour, any tour, the golf ball will fly one foot shorter for every degree the temperature cools, and it will fly one foot farther for every degree the temperature rises. That isn’t a real big deal until you go from summer to winter golfing.

Here, for an example, the summer temperatures are around 100 degrees. Then winter comes, and we are playing in temperatures below 60 degrees. That is a difference of forty feet or more. Forty feet is almost fifteen yards. Are you getting the picture here? In the winter the ball travels A LOT SHORTER THAN IT DOES IN THE SUMMER.

It made my golf swing break down every winter. I would work all spring, summer and fall to get my golf swing working like a well oiled machine. Then, in the winter, I would destroy all of the work I had spent the past nine months perfecting.

Then, one winter many years ago, I decided to swing the club with LESS energy in the winter than in the summer. I made a decision to hit the golf ball MUCH SHORTER all winter long to see if I could keep my golf swing from going down the toilet in the winter. What a wonderful discovery I made!!!

That year was the first year of my career I was able to come into spring with a finely tuned golf swing, and a game to match it. That was the first time in my career I truly learned to trust my golf swing and stopped trying to
overpower the golf course. That was the first time in my life I really learned HOW TO PLAY GOLF like the professional I wanted to be.

You should try it this next season. That year I would hit at least two clubs extra on every shot. If the shot called for a seven iron in the summer, I would take a five iron in the winter and make a good, solid golf swing. My goal was to swing the club correctly and to make the very best contact, the absolute most solid contact, anyone could possibly put on a golf ball. It worked!!! It changed my thinking and my game.

Let’s go to a few Questions for some Answers.

Paul Lesmond wrote a while back and asked whether the “release” information in the “Longer & Straighter” DVD was different than the information in the “5 Easy Lessons.”

Paul: The information is the same. There were several years between the filming of the two DVDs, and I continue to find newer and better ways of explaining or saying the information, but it is all the same. You do elude to “snapping the left wrist just before hitting the golf ball.” This is not how I have ever meant to explain the release. I hope the videos do not actually say it that way.

What I continue to say is that we snap the clubhead downward RIGHT FROM THE TOP OF THE BACK-SWING. Now, get this. Because the throwing or snapping action will cause the forearms to FREEFALL into the hitting area it may FEEL AS THOUGH WE ARE SAVING THE WRISTS into the hitting area. However, this thinking will cause you to pull the hands down into the hitting area like all of the other instructors teach, and that will cause enough tension in the forearms so the wrists do not release soon enough. You will still slice and push the shots.

When we snap the clubhead downward right from the top of the backswing, the wrists AUTOMATICALLY wait until the hitting area to do their thing, but if you try to make this happen, you will only create tension. Just snap the wrists and clubhead downward immediately from the top of the backswing.

Dale Sutton wrote quite a while ago, also and asked a similar question. He asked about the transition from the backswing to the downswing and how to stop it from being so jerky.

Dale, you are PULLING your arms down into the swing, and as I stated just above here, that creates tension and problems. Give this a try. Swing a club in to the backswing and pull down with your arms as quickly as you possibly can. Then take another swing to the top of the backswing and snap the clubhead downward with your wrists.

You will see that pulling or yanking the club is very “quick” and you cannot stop it. Yet, when snapping the clubhead downward into the golf swing it IS IMPOSSIBLE TO GET “QUICK.” This is a big issue with at least 98% of the golfers in the world. They swing with their arms, and that automatically makes the golf swing become “quick.”

Greg Baulch wrote to ask: When chipping from 2 – 10 yards off the green with a slight turn of the shoulders, is there any slight hammer used in this swing or just a firm left arm?

Great question, Greg. Actually, I do want you to use a slight hammering motion. It comes from the back side of the golf ball. When we do this, I do not want you to focus on the shoulders. They will do their thing automatically. Just feel the wrists hinge upward and to the side. It will feel as though you are going to “tap” the trunk of a tree with the clubhead.

I also do not want you to use a firm left arm. When the left arm is firm, we are not able to utilize the wrists in a soft and natural manner. If you tap a tree trunk or tap the earth with the
club, not trying to think of a golf swing, you will notice how “SOFT” your elbows and arms will feel. This is what we should have in our short game especially.

This was the thing Phil Mickelson noticed first of all in Harold’s short game. He has soft arms and hands, because he uses his wrists.

Deb Guilmartin writes and asks: I’m a 34-year old female and play off a 20 handicap. I’ve got a few of your videos and both my husband and I are getting great value out of them. In particular, my drive had become super accurate. I’m still looking for more distance (currently hitting 190-200m off the tee), but love the confidence of just standing there and knowing I’m going to hit it straight. My playing partners often call me “boring” off the tee!

After hitting a good tee shot, I’m left with a certain distance to the green, but am usually in a state of confusion as to which club to hit. What is the best way to determine the distance each club will go?

Thank you for your question, Deb. There is usually about 6-8m difference between clubs for ladies, and approximately 8-10m difference for the men. This is not a lot of distance. When you have a 7-iron to the front edge of the green, you would probably have at least a 6-iron to the middle, and a 5-iron to get the ball past the middle of the green.

The thing I have my students do is to merely pick a club and hit it. Then pay attention to where it TYPICALLY stops. This will begin to give you an average distance for each if your clubs. Make notes on an extra score card, if you need to, in order to help you start to learn what your clubs will do for you. It won’t take you too long, if you will take this approach, because you are getting either nine or eighteen experiments on each round you play.

Gus Clennar writes about a very typical problem: How do I stop HEAD UP creeping in, especially on short approach shots? By head up I mean lifting my head just as I am making contact with the ball, resulting in a dreadful topped or shanked shot.

Gus, this is one of the oldest problems in the game of golf, and I have the only true answer I have ever seen. When we swing the golf club with our arms, the body has to get out of its own way to make room for the arms to swing. In this process, the spine straightens, and thus the head comes up. Every golf pro I have ever talked to about this has a gimmick to TRY to help you. I have the answer.

When we use our wrists and hands to chop or throw the club downward into the downswing, IT IS IMPOSSIBLE for the head to come up in the swing. Period. If you were chopping a log lying on the ground, you would never be concerned about your head coming up. It never does come up when we are chopping.

Touring professionals never come up out of a shot, because they are swinging the club with their hands and wrists—NOT THEIR ARMS. This, once again, was one of the things Phil Mickelson noticed about my student, Harold. He swings the club with his hands, and thus he doesn’t even come close to lifting his head during the contact portion of the swing.

The simple answer is to learn to swing the golf club the same way you would swing a baseball bat—with your hands and wrists. There are no arms in the golf swing.

Peter Adams writes...The combination of using Darrell’s grip (per Inner circle Issue #2), together with his “release” action (per “Cure Your Slice” DVD), has reinstated a long-lost draw to my drives. However, if I wish to fade my drives from a particular tee, it is better to weaken the grip or to consciously not release the wrists/hands in the downswing (which I’m trying to instill as a habit in all shots)? Which approach is least likely to result in an exaggerated response and/or and upset to the rhythm?

Peter, thank you for a great question. My answer would be a simple, “Yes.” That does-
n’t help you much, though, so here I go. You may use whichever method suits you best at the time. Sometimes I delay the release. Sometimes I do not allow any release at all, and other times I merely weaken my grip and aim the ball to the left of my intended landing area. These each will accomplish the same basic thing.

However, with some practice, you will find that you are more easily able to control one method better than another one. You may find that one method makes the ball curve a lot, and another allows you to softly control the fade. These are the things I want all of you to learn. I also want each of you to, as much as possible, learn the differences between each of them in regards to the feedback you receive.

When you can begin to do this, you will not lose your rhythm, or your golf swing. You will actually have added another dimension to your game. We would eventually like to have all of these shots in our bag, and know when, as well as how, to use them. This is the major difference between you and a touring professional. He/she knows how and when to hit all of these shots. They are not stuck into a mold, only having one shot in their repertoire.

When you are able to produce a large number of shots, and/or combinations thereof, you will almost NEVER be in a position where you cannot find a solution to the situation. This makes playing the game exciting to me. None of us hits every shot right where we wish for it to go. However, when we have “all of the shots,” we are technically NEVER IN TROUBLE.

Michelle Price writes: Darrell, I’ve only been playing for a few hears and would like to know why I seem to have trouble converting from woods and driver (which I hit quite well) to picking up an iron and stuffing up the shot? Is the swing different i.e. sweeping as to hitting down on the ball? Most say the swing is the same, but if so, why am I still not converting from woods to irons very well? Is it a common problem and/or part of the learning process?

That was a wonderful question, Michelle. Thank you for taking the time to write. There is no real difference between the swing with a wood or with an iron. The difference is in the application of that swing. If we stand a circle on edge, there is a place at the exact bottom of the circle where it is going right even with the ground. That only takes place for one tiny degree, but it does take place.

Then, there is a place back of that where the circle is still traveling downward slightly, on its way toward that one degree of level. When we swing a wood/driver, we like to touch the ground with that one little level spot exactly at the golf ball.

However, when we swing an iron, we would like that tiny little spot to be just past the bottom of the golf ball. That would mean that the golf club is still traveling SLIGHTLY DOWNWARD just IMMEDIATELY prior to striking the backside of the golf ball. It THEN continues on into the grass and may even take a slight bit of dirt. We call this the divot. This striking process with the irons imparts the required amount of backspin to create the flight on the golf ball.

If the golf ball IS NOT SPINNING BACKWARDS, IT WILL NOT FLY IN THE AIR. PERIOD. That is a law of physics, and we cannot play golf without backspin on the golf ball.

Andrew McIntosh asks: How do you cure the “blocks?” I am a single figure golfer and find that every 2nd or 3rd shot goes right of target, from driver to wedge, from full shots down. When I go right it is not a slice, but it is a straight shot up to 30 degrees off line. HELP!

Andrew, you are doing something quite common for lower handicap golfers. You have
developed a good golf swing, for the most part, but you are also attempting to guide the golf ball. If you were slicing the golf ball, that would tell me you are coming into the ball with an open clubface. However, since you are not slicing the ball, you are coming into the golf ball with the clubface in a fairly good position.

There are two things you my do. First, you are swinging too far to the right with your path. That is sending the ball too far to the right in the first place. Secondly, you need to have your clubface a bit more closed at impact in order to make the ball begin to curve back toward the target.

Always remember, the initial ten or so yards tells us the path of our golf swing. The curve of the shot tells us the clubface position. When we have a shot traveling way off line to the right, we have swung the club in a path which is too much inside-out to the body and the golf ball. When we are curving the golf ball to the right, the clubface is too open.

When the ball is traveling fairly straight, then the clubface is in a good position in relation to the path. The path may be incorrect for the shot we are trying to hit, but the clubface is in good relationship to the path of the club. Therefore, we must swing the club on a path which is in better line with the target.

You need to swing the club more toward the target, and/or close the clubface a bit more in your grip. Either, or a combination of both, will put your shots right back on target.

**Digby Shepard** is in trouble. He wrote a while back and said he is playing off a 9 and is 1) still pulling my irons; 2) Snap hooking one in five tee shots; and 3) doffing my short chips around the green. Please HELP.

Digby, I think I discussed this on the conference call, but it is such a biggie I need to comment on it for you, as well as for others. The pulling and the snap hooking are one in the same. You have one of a couple of things taking place.

First, I would like for you to check your right hand position on the grip. I think your middle two fingers are way too deep into the grip. You should move the grip of the club more into your finger tips on your right hand.

If that doesn’t immediately fix the problem, then you are dong to only other thing which causes all of these problems. You are doing what I call “slapping” with your right hand right at the impact point of your swing. In other words, your right hand is making a “patting” or a “slapping” motion, rather than a “hammering” motion.

Hammering is up and down, and slapping is a sideways motion. The slapping motion gives us the feeling we are just killing the golf ball, but it is only pulling and snap hooking it.

As for the chipping, you aren’t tapping down ward here, either. This is what leads me to believe you are slapping your long shots. You are probably slapping your chips, also. This will lead to topping, pulling, hitting fat, and shanking in your short game. If any of this sounds familiar, start tapping the earth at the golf ball so you can make backspin.

While I haven’t been able to get through all of the questions, this is a pretty good run at them. I really appreciate the questions. Please be patient with me, and I will eventually get to your question and answer it. This is the way we all learn. I guarantee you there are at least fifty others struggling with exactly the same you are. They are just too embarrassed or timid to write. I know that to be true, because I used to be that way. I had a thousand questions, but I was too shy to ask any of them. I thought everyone who read them would think I was stupid.

Boy, did I ever miss out on a lot of good information. Now, I ask readily. I don’t care what others think. I need the information.

Once again, I hope this year is the best year ever for you—both in your life and in your golf.

See you next issue,

*Darrell*